

# WEST ASHLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



## *STRATEGIES DISCUSSION*

prepared for city of charleston july 2014  
prepared by permarr inc.

# DISCUSSION OUTLINE

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Findings

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Framework

Aspirations

City objectives

Strategies

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Ideas

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Action items / Next steps

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# FINDINGS

This is not a traditional economic development strategy  
More akin to vitality enhancement, improvement AND engagement

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## Designed to:

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Enhance livability

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Demonstrate opportunity

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Create a framework for realizing unmet  
potential

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Demonstrate demand for public space

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# FINDINGS

Suburban redevelopment / revitalization is unique

In many ways harder than redevelopment in more urban areas

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No sense of urgency

---

Invisible opportunities

---

Physical form, scale & development pattern

---

No obvious place to start / lack of focus

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Ownership, management & financial realities

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No obvious constituency to mobilize

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# FINDINGS

Start the conversation in a different place

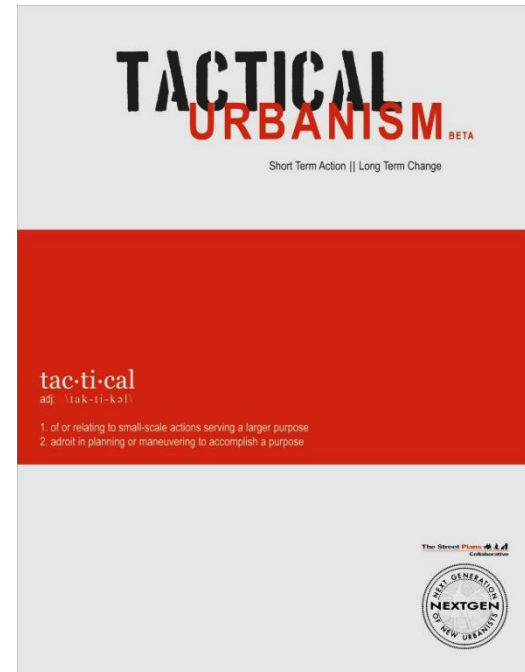
Connect people to place AND people to people

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Experiential

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People-based, volunteer-driven

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Inexpensive, temporary

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Immediate



***Planting small, temporary seeds that lead to more sustainable, people-driven, long-term change.***



# FINDINGS: BUILD A BETTER BLOCK

Short-term improvements leading to long-term change

Give people a job to do & they connect to the process in a deeper way



# FINDINGS: BUILD A BETTER BLOCK

## Key benefits

Neighborhood / people driven

Builds constituency / leadership

Immediate

Action-oriented

Sweat-equity

Temporary, transitional, incremental

Low-cost, economical

Experiential

Not age- or interest-specific

Creative, reflects diversity

Informs future investments

Relatable, relevant

Pragmatic

Social, fun

Changes perceptions

Demonstrates potential

Prompts new thinking

Share-able (crowdsourcing)

Survey / consumer research  
potential



# FRAMEWORK

Why – A pragmatic roadmap for sustainable economic growth

Starting with “why” elevates the conversation

**The purpose of this endeavor is to create a vision for West Ashley to make it a better place to live and to work, the way people want to live and work today...to make it a visibly economically sustainable part of the city...to define its natural role in the region.**

# FRAMEWORK

## Aspirations

### Story

### Connections

Physical  
Social  
Business  
Emotional

### Place

# FRAMEWORK

## City objectives

Envision	Enable	Invest	Measure
Develop a vision, a West Ashley brand	Foster a shared understanding of what people value AND create a framework for realizing new opportunities	Make catalytic investments	Measure outcomes & monitor change

# FRAMEWORK

## Strategies

Encourage / assist in development of key sites

Develop a Sam Rittenberg Corridor Plan / Overlay District

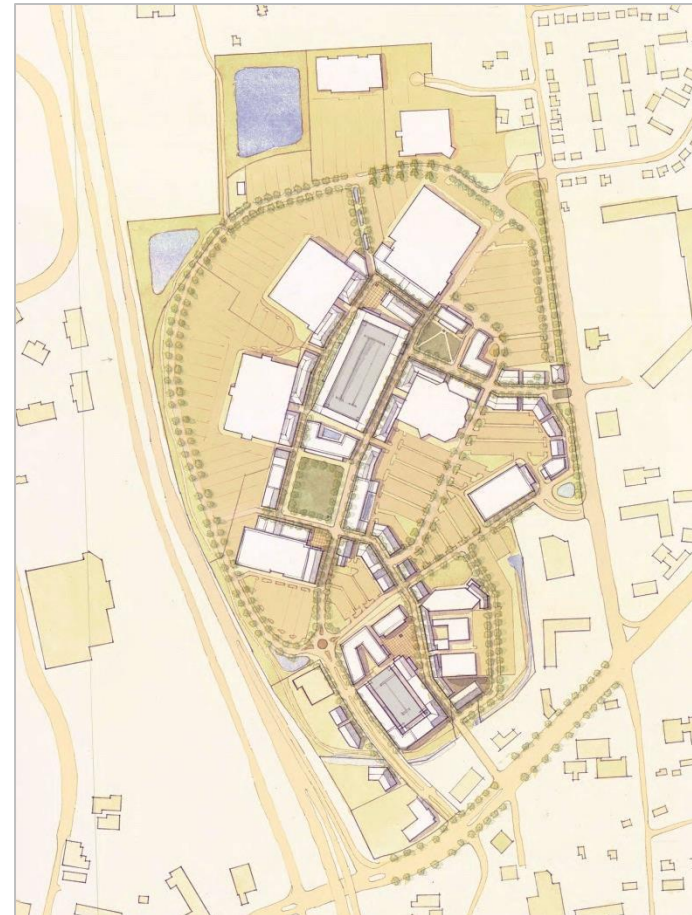
Nurture / facilitate the evolution of interconnected greenspace

Launch a communications strategy

Focus energy, efforts & funding

Grow, enhance stakeholder leadership

Open source development tools, knowledge, expertise & resources



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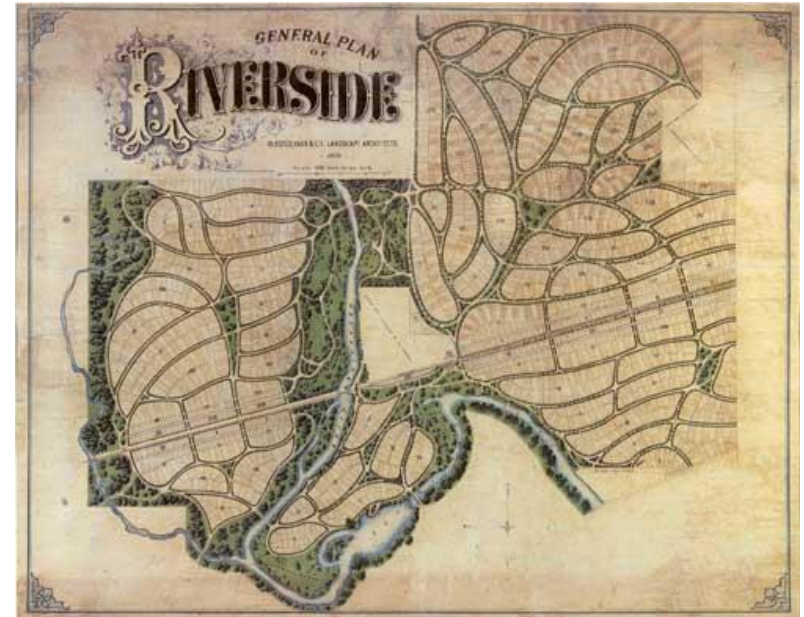
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Grow, enhance stakeholder leadership

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Open source development tools, knowledge, expertise & resources

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*"No single park, no matter how well designed would provide citizens with the beneficial influences of nature; instead parks need to be linked to one another and to surrounding neighborhoods."*

**Frederick Law Olmsted**

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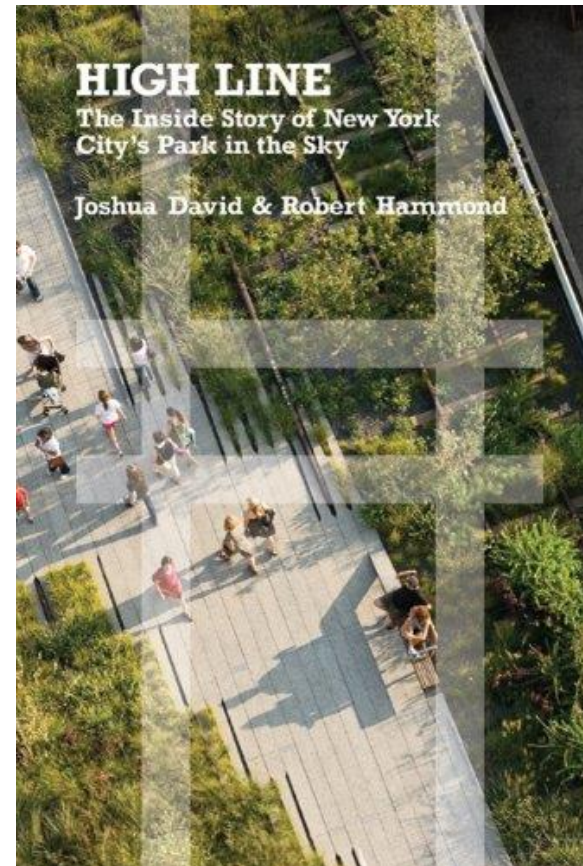
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# FRAMEWORK

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## Aspirations

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Story  
Connections  
Place

---

## Objectives

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Envision  
Enable  
Invest  
Measure

---

## Strategies

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Assist  
Corridor plan  
Greenspace  
Communications  
Focus  
Leadership  
Open Source

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# FRAMEWORK



# FRAMEWORK



# IDEAS

## Bus stops

West Ashley



Montreal - musical swings bus stop





# IDEAS

## Bus stops

### West Ashley



### Detroit – repurposed doors bus stop



# IDEAS

## Bus stops

West Ashley



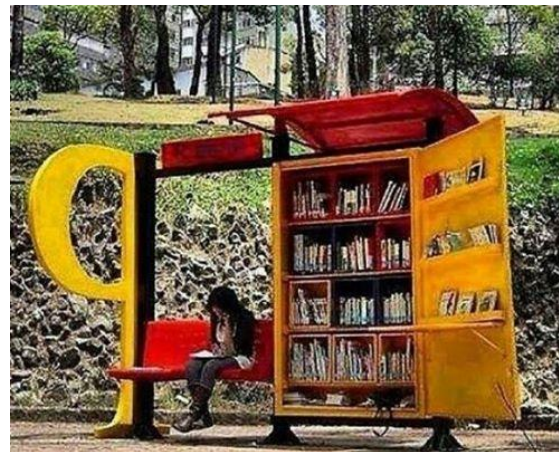
London – edible gardens bus stop



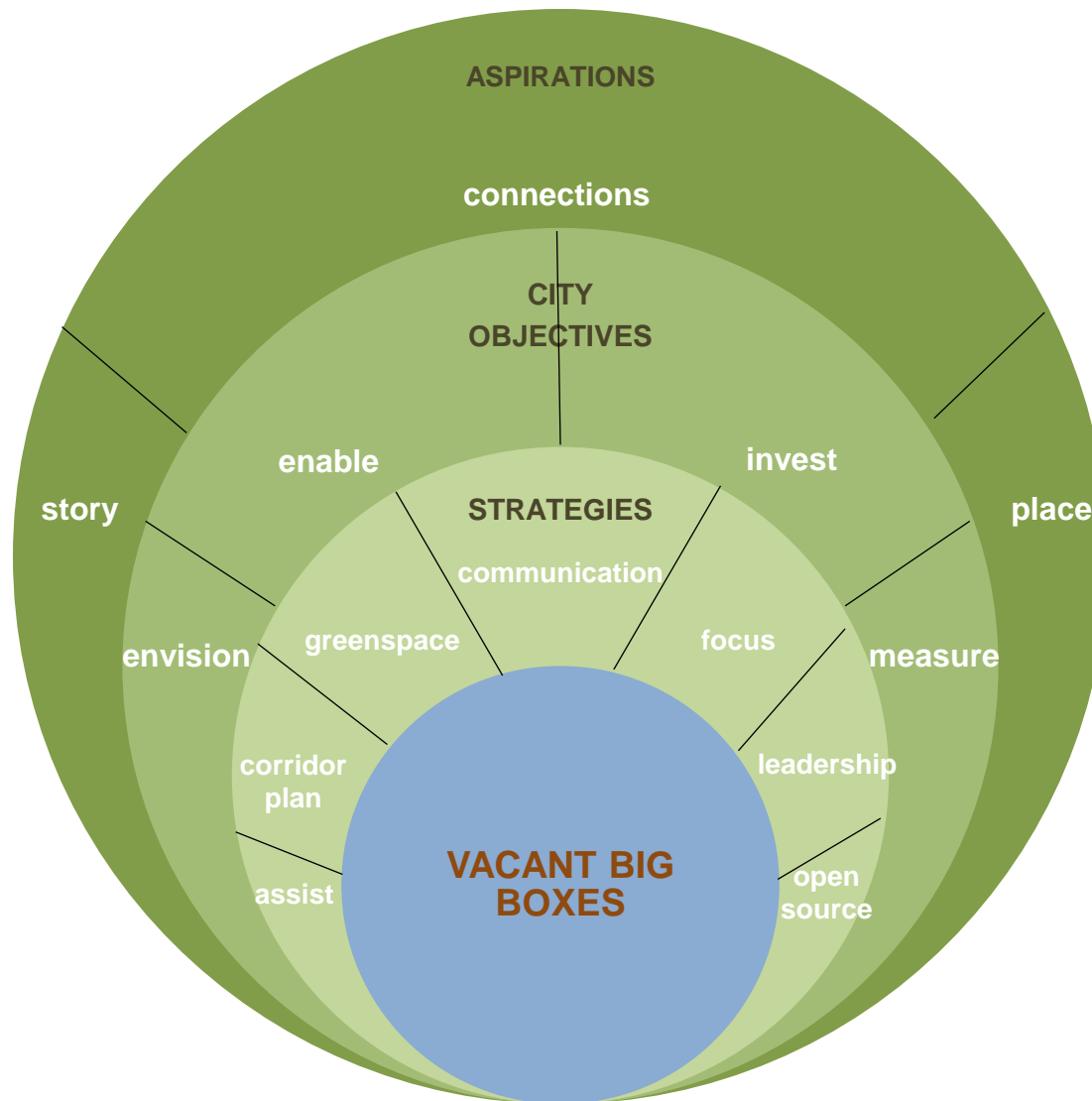


# IDEAS

## Bus stops



# FRAMEWORK



# IDEAS

## Vacant big boxes

Piggly Wiggly, West Ashley, Ashley Town Landing



# GRASSROOTS / BOTTOM-UP

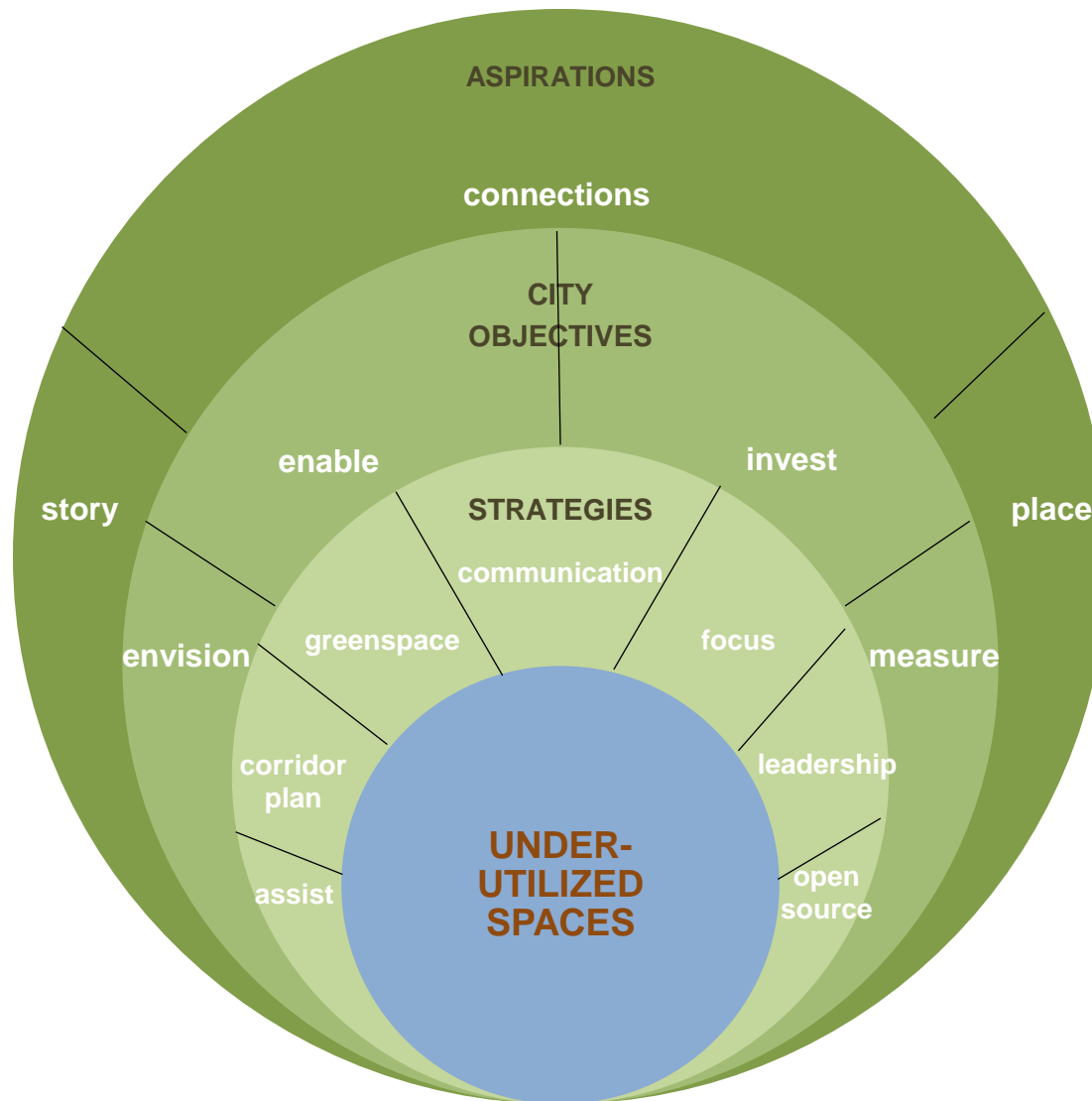
## Vacant big boxes

BetterBlock.org, Piggly Wiggly store in Denton, Texas





# FRAMEWORK





# IDEAS

## Animating underutilized spaces

### West Ashley



### San Antonio – Better Block project



# IDEAS

## Animating underutilized spaces

West Ashley



Denver – Better Block project





# IDEAS

## Animating underutilized spaces



# IDEAS

## Animating underutilized spaces





# IDEAS

## Safe crossings & wayfinding



# IDEAS

## Safe crossings & wayfinding





# IDEAS

## Public spaces





# IDEAS

## Public spaces



# ACTION ITEMS

Wrap up this phase of work

Compile work completed to date

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Package Permar work

PowerPoints

Supporting data tables

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Narrative

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Maps

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# ACTION ITEMS

## Next steps / recommendations

### Near-term & longer-term actions

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#### Immediate / Near term

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Hire a West Ashley champion to implement strategies

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Create a “walk-around” book

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Develop / solicit 2 – 3 demonstration projects

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Meet with stakeholders / “road show”

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Develop a website & social media campaign

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#### Longer-term

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Sam Rittenberg Commercial Revitalization Plan

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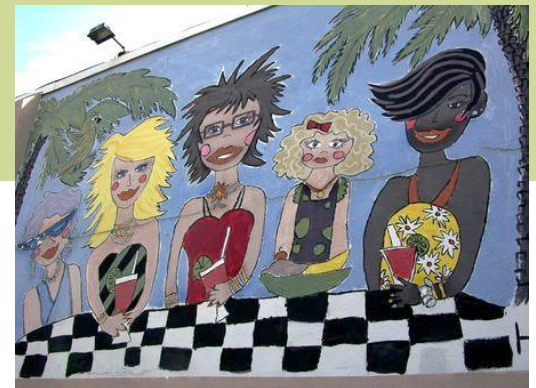
West Ashley Visioning Process

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Appoint a West Ashley Advisory Board

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*DISCUSSION DRAFT*

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